40 YEARS OF THE LIFE AND STRUGGLE OF THE

JORDANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

SEPTEMBER 1983

FOREWORD

In marking the 40th anniversary of the founding of our Party - originally as the "National Liberation League in Palestine", and later as the "Jordanian Communist Party" - a brief review of the Party's march through the past 40 years is needed not only in terms of commemoration, but also under the aspect of drawing appropriate lèssons and generating the will and determination to continue and develop the struggle, and thereby bring it to successful end.

With its exuberant glory, heroic deeds and victories, and with all the difficulties, hardships, pains and setbacks the Party has faced, the 40-year process has constituted as a record of distinction for us and a path of honour along which we will continue to stride.

Our Party's pride in its class identity - as being the Party of the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals - is equal to its pride in its genuine patriotism as a vanguard of the national liberation struggle. Equally great is its pride in its internationalist identity which is unequivocally manifested by our position towards the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union and by establishing the closest relations with it.

We hope the present brochure will achieve its goal in throwing light on the most important events in the history of our Party, and in facilitating the readers' acquaintance with its positions on the various issues encoutered on its path.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND - THE NATIONAL LIBERATION LEAGUE IN PALESTINE

The National Liberation League was founded in Haifa, in late September 1943, as the political vanguard of the Arab working class in Palestine. The establishment of the "League" and its democratic presentation of the Palestinian cause - which came at a time when the Soviet Union was scoring great victories in the forefront of the peoples´ struggle against fascism - was a direct reflection of a series of socio-economic developments that had taken place in the structure of the Arab society in Palestine during the years of the Second World War.

The failure of the 1936-1939 revolution in Palestine, and the intensification of repression and terror at the hands of the British Mandate authorities, led to a pull-off in the Palestinian Arab national movement. The traditional national leadership which prevailed at the head of the national movement was unable to conduct the revival of that movement as the revolution had suffered the setback. Due to their semi-feudal and bourgeois class background, certain circles of that leadership aligned themselves with the fascist Axis states, on the basis of the false assumption of "my enemy´s enemy is my friend", while other quarters connived with British imperialism.

However, the state of stagnation experienced by the Arab Palestinian national movement on the eve of the Second World War did not last long. The involvement of the Soviet Union in the international battle against fascism, the steadfastness of the Soviet people in the face of the Nazi aggression,

and the total defeat which the Soviet Army inflicted upon the invading German.troops at Stalingrad in the spring of 1943, resulted in a radical turn in the war and changed the future of humanity as a whole.

The Palestinian and the other Arab peoples were not isolated from the influence of those great historic events. Besides the developments taking place in the international situation, important socio-economic developments were also underway in Palestine, which were eventually conducive to radical changes in the structure of Palestinian Arab society.

The Second World War turned Palestine into a stage of concentration of British armies and a bastion for the latter´s supply with provision. Consequently, Britain duly built a number of camps and workshops, and allowed the establishment of many local industries. A definite numerical growth of the Arab working class was experienced there and then, unemployment among its ranks was virtually nil.

These developments were conducive to the mounting socio-economic struggle of the Arab workers, and to an invigoration in their trade-union movement. At the same time, the democratic forces in Palestine also gained strength, and the struggle for democratic freedoms increased to an extent that the Mandate authorities were forced to relax their repressive grip and respect certain political and trade-union rights. In that period, too, literature of the Communist Parties in the Arab and European countries started to come in and be overtly distributed by some book-sellers.

The animation and quantiative growth of the Arab trade-union movement, the mounting progressive tendencies within

the ranks of democratic Arab intellectuals, the victories of the Soviet Union, the increasing publicity of the theory of scientific socialism, and the formation of many Marxist circles, all helped the creation of a strong national progressive tendency within the working masses and Arab intellectuals in Palestine. This very tendency was involved in seeking appropriate organizational forms of moulding its struggles and stances, when a national split in the Communist Party of Palestine took place in the spring of 1943. A group of Arab Communists who walked out on that party, undertook the responsibility of organizing a new tendency; the result was the establishment of the "National Liberation League in Palestine".

Since its inception, the "League" was aware of the urgent need of mobilizing the potentials of the Arab people of Palestine in a united national front. It further stressed that national unity was the means of confrontation with the imperialist-Zionist conspiracy. The "League" also realized that the unity of the Arab working-class movement in Palestine constituted the cornerstone for achieving a united national front which would group all the popular classes of the people, as the working class is the "patriotic vanguard", and it is its duty to assume the "progressive leadership" if it wants to "preserve the fundamentality of the national progressive movement and proceed with it to the shores of development and prosperity".

The "League" considered the cause of the Arab people of Palestine to be a cause of a people struggling for their national independence and for their liberation from the yoke of colonial domination. The "League" unmasked the actual nature

of Zionism as a reactionary racist movement allied to imperialism, and revealed the connivance of Arab reaction with colonialism in their joint conspiracy against the Palestinian people. The "League" emphasized the relationship between the Palestinian cause and the elimination of racism in the world, with a view to achieving the independence of all peoples in their own countries and the securing of a lasting world peace.

In its memorandum of 10 October 1945, addressed to Mr Attlee, the then Prime Minister of Britain, the "League" pointed out that the "Palestinian Complex" was the outcome of the aggressive policy "that had been pursued by the British government since the first days of its rule in Palestine. That policy provided large possibilities for Zionism to develop its aggressive forces and consolidate its positions of onslaught in Palestine... today, the whole thing threatens our homeland with blood and tears".

The "League" repelled the attempts of the imperialist and Zionist forces which aimed at persuading world public opinion that the Palestinian cause was nothing more than a question of Jewish migration /or the halt of that migration/; the "League" correctly asserted that - like in any other colonialized country - what was involved was a question of independence and liberation from foreign colonial influence. The "League" emphasized that the Arab population of Palestine were insecure in face of the evils of the Zionist migration, "as the conditions of that migration are out of their hands", proceeding from the premise that "Zionist migration -and even Zionism itself -is a 'product' of colonialism in our country; that the tree does not vanish with the disappearance

of a branch; and that the original problem cannot be solved by solving those which have sprouted from it". The "League" demanded democracy, and the granting of the right to self-determination to the Palestinian people "as a practical means for the solution of the problems being faced by our homeland".

The "National Liberation League" strove to define the actual meaning of the right to self-determination, so that no room would be left for its misinterpretation or for emptying it of its genuine content. Therefore, the "League" declared that the right to self-determination "remains an ambiguous term if the preconditions of its guarantees are not provided: that is the recognition of the people´s right to obtain their national liberation and their country´s independence from any foreign colonial influence and to independently determine their internal and external affairs, while the implementation of these rights should be carried out by national and popular institutions which freely and independently reflect the people´s will." The "League" also pointed out that publicity of political and democratic freedoms constitutes the prerequisite for ensuring the right of the Palestinian people to practise self-determination; "it is impossible for a country to secure its right to self-determination, and implement this right, unless democracy is spread among its people".

In this connection, the "League" unmasked the actual face of the Zionist movement, refuted the Zionists´ claims to the effect that theirs is "a national liberation movement", and proved that Zionism was "a reactionary occupational type of movement which has never called for the independence of Palestine, and when its leaders are cornered, they announce:

´we will never demand independence, unless we ensure the establishment of the Jewish state... which actually means it will never request independence´". The "League" also underlined that Zionism was a type of movement "which fears democracy in its action and objectives". It does not want democracy to prevail in Palestine, as that "will mean the establishment of a national democratic regime there and the elimination of the dream of a Jewish state, simply because the latter would only be set up by the undermining of the two buttresses of each national liberation movement: the right to self-determination, and democracy".

In its efforts for finding a solution to the "Palestinian complex", the "National Liberation League" was confronted with the problem of 600,000 Jews, the majority of whom had been brought into Palestine before and during the Second World War by the Zionist movement, for which purpose the latter had made use of the difficult conditions which the Jews were suffering from in Eastern and Central Europe due to the anti-Semitic policies that had been followed by the fascist circles in that part of the continent.

Despite the expansion of Zionist influence among the Jewish masses in Palestine, the "League" tried ever since its inception to draw demarcation lines between Zionism on the one hand, and the Jewish population in Palestine on the other. In its Charter adopted in February 1944, the "League" pointed to the necessary distinction between Zionism and the Jewish inhabitants. It further underlined that Zionism ran counter to the interests of the Jews themselves, and rejected the allegations of the Zionists that they represented the interests of the Jews as a whole. In this respect, the

"League" pointed out that the Zionist movement was basically a movement of the Jewish big bourgeoisie allied to imperialism and employing the Jewish masses inside and outside Palestine in the service of its own class interests.

The "League" emphasized the importance of deepening contradictions between the Jewish masses on the one hand and Zionism on the other. It called upon the Arab national movement in Palestine to pursue a wise policy that would help weaken the influence of the Zionist movement among the Jewish population in Palestine. It further underlined that the interest of the Jewish masses in Palestine was linked with the triumph of the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people against imperialism and Zionism.

In this connection, the "League" criticized the stances of the national executive who often declared that it "would be impossible to peacefully co-exist with the Jewish inhabitants in Palestine, secure any of their democratic rights, or reach an understanding with them". The "League" stressed that such stances would facilitate the task of Zionism which "overtly declares that the Arab national movement in Palestine harbours ill will against the Jewish inhabitants, and that the independence sought by the national movement means the massacre of the Jews".

Already early in the process, the "League" warned of the dangers of the impractical policy of the traditional national Arab leadership towards the Jewish inhabitants in Palestine. Such a policy would lead to the partitioning of Palestine, "and partitioning is the most dangerous solution which will bring the country into catastrophe and internal

disturbances, or it means the guarantee of the future of Zionism, and subsequently, the guarantee of colonial presence in all of the Arab countries". The "League" emphasized that the guarantee of the democratic rights of the Jews in Palestine "does not at all mean a concession on our part with respect to our national rights or any of our just demands; rather, it is adherence to these rights, practical struggle to realize them, and a means for making world public opinion understand that our struggle for those demands is a just struggle which serves the interests of the Jews themselves, but never plays up to the interests of Zionism or colonialism".

The "National Liberation League" considered the historic importance of the turn that took place in the process of world politics soon after the Second World War, which conduced to the emergence of the Soviet Union as "a cornerstone" in international politics; that is, it became impossible to settle any major international issue without the Soviet Union's participation. On this basis, the "League" believed that the transfer of the Palestinian cause to the UN - where the Soviet Union enjoys the veto power - would hamper the attempts of the imperialist circles aimed at achieving a solution to that problem in favour of Zionism and at the expense of the Arab people of Palestine.

When British imperialism proposed, on April 2, 1947, the inclusion of the Palestinian problem on the agenda of the General Assembly, the "League" supported the proposition of presenting it before the UN; in fact, the "League" considered it a success for the Palestinian cause, as that would release it from the imperialist circle formed around it. Simultaneously, the "League" criticized the traditional national leadership

of not taking the initiative itself, but left it to imperialism, of presenting the issue to the UN.

Following the establishment of a UN-International Fact Finding Mission in Palestine, the "League" issued a statement where it warned of the imperialist manoeuvres aimed at setting off religious and racial belligerency in Palestine, and criticized the traditional national leadership for its ambignous attitudes towards the democratic solution of the problem during the UN discussions. In its afore-mentioned statement, the "League" pointed to the necessity of contacting the International Committee of Inquiry, and cooperating with it to unveil the facts which imperialism and Zionism were trying to conceal. The "League" called for the involvement of the people by holding a national conference to adopt a popular policy which would be able to rescue Palestine from the dangers of partition and from the intrigues of imperialism and Zionism.

The "National Liberation League" had continued to oppose the UN Resolution on the Partitioning of Palestine and strove towards the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state on the whole of Palestinian territory, until the date of issue of that UN Resolution, on November 29, 1947.

Even after a majority in the UN adopted the decision on partition, which was based on the ending of the British mandate and the setting up of two states, Arab and Jewish, in Palestine, with a common economy, the "League" noted that British imperialism was actually seeking the "establishment of an exclusive Jewish state, the annexation of the remaining part of Palestine to Trans-Jordan, the undermining of the proposed

economic unity, and the prevention by all means of Arab-Jewish cooperation with a view to maintaining a united, undivided Palestine."

After the adoption of the UN Resolution, the "National Liberation League" faced one of its most critical periods. With the exception of the point concerning the termination of the British mandate, the UN Resolution did not provide the ideal solution to the Palestinian cause; it made way to further injustice on the Arab people of Palestine and their inalienable national rights. However, within those miserable conditions brought about in the Arab world by imperialism, Zionism and pro-colonial leaderships, the "League" perceived that the only real alternative to the UN Resolution was a dreadful catastrophe of the Arab people of Palestine, especially at a time when they were facing a systematic and all-our conspiracy of imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction aimed at evicting them from their homeland, and depriving them of their right to self-determination and establishment of their independent state in their homeland.

Therefore, in February 1948 the "National Liberation League" developed its position on the UN resolution. The majority of the delegates to its Conference which was convened in Nazareth, accepted that resolution and decided to call on the Arab masses to stay in their lands and prevent the imperialist, Zionist and reactionary forces from implementing the conspiracy they had already hatched against the Arab people of Palestine. Meanwhile, however, British imperialism was lying in ambush. In January 1948, it cancelled the licence of the "League's" paper, ALITTIHAD /UNION/, and in connivance with the Zionist and reactionary Arab circles, launched a

comprehensive campaign of repression against the Communists.

As the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary conspiracy was implemented, and the catastrophe was brought upon the Arab people of Palestine, the "National Liberation League in Palestine" was exposed to separation. The majority of its leadership and cadres remained in the territory where Israel had been created, and a number of the "League's" leaders and affiliates stayed in what became known as the West Bank. In May 1951, the members of the "League" in the West Bank established - in cooperation with the Marxist units of Trans-Jordan - the Jordanian Communist Party... and a new stage of the struggle started.

A MARCH OF NOBLE MILITANCY

FIRST STAGE /1948-1951/

The catastrophe which was imposed upon the Palestinian people in 1947 and 1948, together with the repression, slaughter and dispersal they were subjected to at the hands of the Zionist fascist hords in collaboration with US and British imperialism and with the overt connivance of the reactionary ruling Arab forces at that time, has had extremely harmful consequences on the very existence of that people.

Thousands of helpless people - men, women and children - were exposed to cowardly killings and bestial annihilation involving many towns and villages, which was subsequently followed by the dispersion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people to the neighbouring Arab countries.

As a result, a number of Palestinian national bodies, trade-unions, professional, political and cultural organizations were destroyed, and their leaders and activists - including those of the "National Liberation League in Palestine - were dispersed in a number of countries in the area. Some of them settled in the West Bank and from there proceeded to East Jordan. The "League" then passed through a very crucial and complex stage.

At that stage, the significant role of the "National Liberation League" was demonstrated by its confrontation with the conspiracy which was then underway against the Palestinian Arab people. From the very beginning, as early as 1948, the "League" disclosed the three partners in the plot, namely, British colonialism and other imperialist states, especially the USA; the Zionist movement; and Arab reaction, which were all at one in their designs of tearing up Palestine, dispersing the Palestinian people and deliterating their national identity.

In face of this comprehensive, dangerous conspiracy, the "National Liberation League" approved the UN Resolution on Partition as securing the establishment of an independent Palestinian state which would preserve Palestinian national identity and constitute the basis of the future Palestinian struggle for the restoration of Palestine's democratic unity. The "League" exposed the role of the armies of the reactionary Arab states which came to Palestine under the cover of confused campaigns allegedly aimed at rescuing Palestine and expelling the Jews from there. The traditional Palestinian leadership aligned itself with these campaigns.

In spite of the atmosphere of terror which was created by the military command of those reactionary armies, the martial laws imposed and the wave of accusations launched against the Palestinians, particularly the Communists, the "League" adopted a courageous stance when, in July 1948, it distributed a leaflet which revealed the dimensions of the conspiracy hatched against the Palestinian people with the participation of the Arab armies that had arrived in Palestine. The "League" appealed to the soldiers of those armies to turn their arms against the reactionary regimes in their countries, strive to overthrow them and bring in patriotic regimes instead. The "League" called on the Palestinian people to equip themselves with vigilance vis-a-vis the conspiracy which was underway to prevent them from establishing their independent national state.

In August 1948, the "League" issued another statement in support of a Palestinian national conference which was eventually convened in Gaza in that same month, as that event would constitute a step towards protecting Palestinian national integrity. The "League" also countered a campaign which was launched by the reactionary regime in Trans-Jordan against that conference.

Despite the campaigns of repression which were unleashed by the Iraqi, Jordanian and Egyptian armies against the Palestinian Communists, involving the imprisonment of dozens of them, and the intensified and frenzied anti-communist policies of that time, the "National Liberation League" continued its activities, issues a member of leaflets which were mainly concentrated on unmasking the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary conspiracy designed against the Palestinian people,

and calling for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in accordance with the UN Resolution of November 29, 1947.

The events of the last years have proved the correctness of the position that was then adopted by the "National Liberation League in Palestine", as the present Palestinian national leadership, represented by the PLO, has approved, in its programme adopted by the recent sessions of the Palestinian National Council, the aim of establishing an independent Palestinian state. Moreover, 29th November of each year has now been marked as International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People's Struggle for Independence and National Liberation.

Throughout the years 1949, 1950 and 1951, the activities of the "League" were concentrated against the reactionary regime in Jordan, as the latter was assigned by imperialism and Arab reaction the task of being the main instrument in eliminating Palestinian national identity and in annexing Palestinian lands to its territory, soon after that same regime had concluded the ill-reputed treaty with the Zionist leaders of Israel in Rhodis, in 1949, according to which large parts of Palestinian territory were handed over to the Zionists in return for their approval of the annexation of the Central regions of Palestine to East Jordan.

"Al Muqawemeh Al Shaabiyeh" /Popular Resistance/, the then central organ of the National Liberation League, whose first issue appeared on January 1, 1949, played an outstanding role in exposing the reactionary regime of Jordan, disclosing its submission to British colonialism, and mobilizing the Palestinian masses against that regime's treason of the Palestinian cause and its annexationist plans affecting the Palestinian lands and people.

"Al Muqawemeh Al Shaabiyeh" also played an important role by fighting against the state of demoralization and despair among the Palestinian masses resulting from the treason of Arab reaction, its overt conspiracy with imperialism, and its disregard for its peoples´ rights and dignity, including the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people. "Al Muqawemeh Al Shaabiyeh" strove hard to maintain the people in their homes, resisted their eviction, and unmasked the reactionary rulers´ conspiratorial intentions of annexation.

When the reactionary regime of Jordan expressed its intention to call parliamentary elections in the spring of 1950, with the participation of the Palestinian masses in the annexed Palestinian territories, with a view to shileding the process of annexation with a legal, constitutional character, and demonstrating that the whole scheme was enjoying Palestinian popular support, the "National Liberation League" was the only political organization which constantly and actively opposed that process, whereas the nationalist political parties supported, perceiving it as a form of Arab unity. The "League" organized a nation-wide campaign of mobilization against the election plot. It published a number of leaflets which were widely distributed in towns and camps, put up slogans on the wall and public roads, issued stickers with such slogans as: "Down with the election conspiracy!", "Down with the conspiracy of annexing Palestinian territory to the British colony in East Jordan!", "Down with Globb, the executioner!" and "Long live the independent Palestinian state!"

That campaign of mobilization reached its climax in the demonstration organized by the "League" in Nablus, in early

April 1950, where the same anti-election and anti-annexation slogans were raised. That demonstration outraged the reactionary rulers of Amman who lost their minds completely. They reacted with unprecedented brutality, and subsequently unleashed an all-out campaign of arrest against the "League" members and sympathisers. Dozens of them were tied to the tails of horses and dragged in the full heat of the day. That caravan of inhuman suffering set out from the Central Prison of Nablus in the West Bank, along the main road to Amman, and passed through the refugee camps of Balateh and Askar, amidst indignant protests of the Palestinian masses. Comrade Rawhi Zeid Al Keelani fell martyr to this criminal act.

It came as no surprise that among the most significant actions to be taken by the Parliament brought into power by those elections was the approval by the Parliament of the annexation of the Arab territory of Palestine to East Jordan, and the legal introduction of the anti-communist law which is still in force today, and according to which a Communist is liable to a sentence of up to 15 years of hard labour.

SECOND STAGE /1951-1957/

In the spring of 1951, the Central Committee of the National Liberation League of Palestine adopted a resolution on changing its name to "the Jordanian Communist Party", as the Marxist units which had been scattered in Jordan joined it,

adapting to the new situation after the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples had come to co-exist in one state, i.e. Jordan, a country with a regime shackled by the Jordanian-British Treaty, the presence of the British troops on its territory, and the command of its army, state security police and intelligence controlled by British officers. Later on, life itself proved the correctness of that resolution.

Inspired by the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, and after having objectively and scientifically studied the new situation, the Central Committee of the new party worked out a realistic programme which included the following demands:

1. The abolition of the Jordanian-British Treaty and the complete evacuation of the British troops from Jordan.
2. The Arabization /i.e. nationalization/ of the Jordanian army by its purge of all British officers, particularly General Globb.
3. The enforcement of public freedoms: the formation of political parties and trade unions; freedom of the press, publication and meeting.
4. The organization of free, democratic elections which would bring about a representative government responsible to the parliament.
5. The reduction of the working day to eight hours.
6. Equal rights for women, and the guaranteeing of their right to participation in the elections.
7. The annulment of all restrictive regulations, including the Law on Defence and the anti-communist law which was imposed by British colonialism in 1950.

With its organizations and leadership, the Party enthusiastically and courageously strove for the realization of those demands. Very soon, dozens and hundreds of young Jordanians /workers, peasant youth, students, intellectuals and women/ joined its ranks. Huge demonstrations were frequently organized in the streets where the demonstrators clashed with the police and steadfastly faced the blows of the latter´s agents, Globb´s hordes and army troops. The country´s jails had hardly emptied when they were filled up again with enthusiastic and patriotic young people.

In the early 1950s, the imperialist conspiracies designed to liquidate the Palestinian cause were intensified, including the "Clapp" and "Jonsson" plans, and aggressive pacts emerged in the region, such as the Middle East Command, the Baghdad Pact, etc., with a view to linking our country with the imperialist coach and transforming it into a military base of encirclement and aggression against the Arabs´ sincerest friend, the Soviet Union, and the other countries of the socialist community.

The Party assumed its primary internationalist task of linking the national movement of Jordan with the Arab and international liberation movement, as one of the essential guarantees for the victory of our national cause.

With full awareness, the Party linked the national struggle with the international struggle, and the class struggle with the general national struggle - that is, the Party linked the general with the specific, always defining a wise policy which considerably helped the work and struggle of the national and progressive forces, rallying around the Party´s firm and principled policy of patriotism.

We are now approaching the end of 1955, when the Baghdad Pact and its messenger, the British General Templer, were knocking at the door of Jordan. Massive popular demonstrations broke out in the towns and in the countryside. An unprecedented rejection of that pact was expressed by the masses inhabiting both banks of the river Jordan. Consequently, the pro-pact government of Jordan was forced to resign, and Jordan´s involvement in that pact was abrogated. In this respect, the Party and its masses, together with the other national and progressive forces, played a significant role.

Two months later, the Jordanian army was "Arabized", General Globb and his military aides were expelled, the political prisoners were set free, the reactionary Parliament was dissolved, and the masses looked forward to a free democratic election of their representatives.

This clearly indicated that the national demands which were consistantly raised by the Party were being achieved; hence, the masses´ confidence in the Party and the further consolidation of the national movement as a whole, with their mobilization around them increased, and their demand for the new elections further encouraged. Those elections were the first of their type in the history of the country. They had a free and democratic character, and their results were to a large extent consistent with the aspirations of the popular masses. The overwhelming majority of the new parliamentarians truly represented all national orientations. Subsequently, the first patriotic government was established in Jordan under the chairmanship of Mr Suliman Nabulsi. Ever since its formation, that government had established an atmosphere of enthusiasm, stability and confidence among the popular masses.

A few weeks after the formation of the new government came the tripartite aggression against Nasser´s Egypt. Immediately, Committees of National Guidance were set up throughout the country. The people showed readiness to offer everything - weapons and finance - to repel that aggression.

Very soon, as early as 1957, "Al Jamahir" - the weekly organ of the JCP - appeared in public and was received by the masses with unprecedented enthusiasm.

In the first half of March 1957, the government abolished the unjust Jordanian-British Treaty, and sent back home the rest of the British troops, a step that was received by the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples on both banks of the river Jordan with the utmost joy and pride, and which constituted a culmination of the struggle of a people who were determined to obtain independence with their own blood. At the same time, the people´s confidence in their leadership and in the struggle´s advance was further consolidated.

The government also decided to establish dimplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and the People´s Republic of China, subject to ratification by the Parliament.

However, the situation did not develop in the way it had been hoped for; internal and external conspiracies were intensified. The reactionary forces, whose interests were seriously endangered, overtly and covertly extended their hands to an alternative neo-colonialism which would come to fill the "vacuum" left behind by the defunct British colonialism; this was Eisenhower´s colonial theory of "filling the vacuum" in the Middle East.

AREAS OF THE PARTY´s MASS ACTIVITIES

The National Front: In implementing the strategic slogan it raised concerning the establishment of the national front in Jordan, the JCP had started - ever since its founding - to set up contacts with the organized and independent patriotic forces, with a view to achieving a minimum programme of agreement with them. In spite of the immense difficulties with which these efforts met due to the practices of repression and terror pursued by the reactionary authorities and their agencies, as well as the campaigns unleashed by them to the effect of evoking fear from joint actions with the Communists in particular, the front did assume various forms and different names for this or that defined temporary objective. The importance of such a front was most manifest in its opposition and resistance to the Baghdad Pact in mid-1950s. At that time, the aims of the front were publicly demonstrated by the daily struggle waged in the streets of the country´s towns and villages, demanding respect for democratic freedoms, and against emergency laws and imperialist pacts.

Clubs and Associations: The JCP also devoted special attention to the cultural and literary activities of the people. Accordingly, it worked for the establishment of specific clubs, as it deemed them useful in disseminating national and political awareness and progressive and Marxist literature among the broad popular masses.

On the initiative of the Party, the "Women´s Vigilance Association" was founded in 1952. In its programme, the WVA propounded the women´s right to work and equal wage. It also demanded respect for the women´s right to participate in the

parliamentary and municipal elections. Moreover, the WVA organized seminars and produced articles in its weekly magazine "Al Sareeh" /Candid/ until its closure by the authorities. Upon its founding, the WVA joined the ranks of the World Federation of Democratic Women. On the basis of that vanguard women´s organization, the "Arab Women Society" and the "Women´s Union of Jordan" were later formed.

Also on the initiative of the JCP, the "Women´s Association for the Eradication of Iliteracy in Jordan" was established in 1972, and joined the ranks of the WFDW a year later.

In mid-1950s, the Party took the initiative of founding the "Union of Democratic Youth of Jordan" which later affiliated itself to the world Federation of Democratic Youth. The UDYJ issues a periodical, "AL GHAD", /Tomorrow/ and plays an important role in the organization and mobilization of the young people of Jordan in the struggle for a free, prosperous Jordan.

In 1953, the JCP, in cooperation with the other national forces managed to convene the first conference of Jordanian students, setting up an organization whose branches were very soon formed throughout the country. Later, the name of that student organization was changed to the "Union of Jordan Students" and later on to the "National Union of Jordan Students". Branches of the NUJS have stretched out to many other countries. The NUJS continues its struggle at the head of the student movement of Jordan, inside and outside the country, in defence of the students´ academic and social rights, playing an important role in the national movement of Jordan, it publishes a regular central organ, "TARIQUNA" /Our way/ and has been for many years a member of the International Union of Students and its governing bodies.

The Trade Unions and Their Federation: On the basis of the Communists' experience in the trade-union movement, which they had acquired through their struggle in the Palestinian trade-union movement, a number of trade unions appeared in Jordan in the early 1950s. Following arduous struggles, these trade unions wrenched their legalization in the country; among them was the "Trade-Union of Agriculture Workers" which involved hundreds of rural labourers. In 1954, those trade unions were unified in a single body, and the Federation of Trade Unions of Jordan was established.

The National Peace Committees: In the early 1950s, the JCP took the initiative of launching action for the prevention of nuclear war. In this connection, it organized a campaign collecting signatures in support of the Stockholm Appeal which called for the banning of nuclear weapons, and formed a number of Peace Committees in towns and villages. The peace movement of Jordan has participated in many international conferences. Accordingly, the authorities' response was evident; a comprehensive campaign of arrests was launched against peace advocates. In 1954, the national peace committees founded a magazine, "AL FAJR AL JADEED" /The New Dawn/ which unfortunately did not last long, as the authorities closed it down.

The Dissemination of the Theory of Scientific Socialism: Since its inception, the JCP has been involved in the dissemination of scientific socialism. Its cadres have translated, distributed and written thousands of books, leaflets and publications on Marxism-Leninism, introduced the Soviet Union as the true friend of the peoples of the world, including our Arab peoples, and have raised high the banner of friendship with it. The JCP was the first voice raised in this respect in the history of Jordan.

Participation in the Parliamentary Elections: The JCP took part in the elections of 1951. However as soon as the JCP's candidates were named in public, the authorities had arrested them and held them until the end of the election campaign.

In 1954, the Party launched a more active campaign in the parliamentary elections. Once again the Party's candidates were arrested during and after the elections.

In 1956, in a different situation, the JCP participated in the elections with much more vigour, and announced its candidates in various regions - Amman, Karak, Irbid, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Nablus - as candidates of the National Front. That election campaign enjoyed strong support from the masses which was clearly demonstrated by the tens of thousands of people voting for the Front candidates. As a result, the JCP was able to send two of its own members, and one more number of the Front, to the Parliament.

THIRD STAGE /1957-1967/

Ten years later, the masses of the two peoples, on both banks of the river Jordan were subjected to a wave of terror and bitter deprivation, persecution, hunger and dispersal. After the reactionary coup d'état which toppled the patriotic government, the US intruder arrived in the country from across the Ocean, with pockets bulging with dollars and ships loaded with shackles, truncheons and guns, with a view to aborting a revolution of a people earnest for liberation and emancipa-

tion. The intruder brought along fascist experts from the FRG and the CIA to achieve the same goal, with the use of unprecedented new forms of bestiality which had never before been experienced by Jordan or any other Arab country. Under the burden of this terror and repression, dozens and hundreds of the people´s sons fell victims, and a number of institutions and organizations collapsed, but the JCP remained immune to repression and persecution - and to death. Today, the JCP continues its struggle with ardour and courage which are permanent characteristics of the Communists at all times and everywhere.

National Unity: The Communists realized the authenticity of the militant unity of the fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. Though they firmly opposed the process of annexing the remaining Palestinian territory to official Jordan, they strove for deepening the basis of militant unity of the Jordanian and Palestinian popular masses. They opposed all attempts aimed at separating the two peoples on regional grounds. They also exposed the policy of discrimination and regional dogmatism adopted by the authorities with a view to setting one people against the other, and eventually subduing them both.

Ever since the onset of the new relations between the two peoples, the authorities have felt that the danger posed to their autocratic, anti-democratic and pro-imperialist rule lies basically in the unity of the two peoples´ struggle, and the unity of their aims of liberation and progress. In order to perpetuate their rule, these authorities have sought to sow the seeds of division through the policy of discrimination and instigation, not to mention repression and persecution.

The JCP has warned of this dangerous policy and its destructive consequences for both peoples. The Party has worked hard to mobilize the masses and involve them in the common struggle against colonialism and imperialism and their plans, as well as against Zionism and aggression, for democracy and people´s participation. It was amidst this struggle that regionalism was trodden down in the mud under the feet of the masses - and only then did the masses achieve their historic victories.

As the campaign of repression was intensified soon after the patriotic government of Suliman Nabulsi had been toppled, the authorities again resorted vigorously to the weapons of division and discrimination. Through various measures, the authorities managed to sow the seeds of doubt and distrust between the two peoples, with a view to getting them involved in secondary clashes totally irrelevant to their common struggle against their enemies.

It was mostly thanks to our Party that warning was given of this phenomenon and its dangers. On the basis of its class outlook, the JCP stuck to its constant position of sincerity towards the militant unity of the two peoples vis-a-vis the ruling class alliance made up of the upper echelons of both peoples. In its struggle today, our Party proceeds from the premise that the cause of the two peoples in Jordan is one: under one aspect, it is the establishment of a national democratic regime which will untie Jordan´s links with imperialism, establish the closest relations with the Arab and international liberation movement, as well as with the socialist community, particularly the Soviet Union, and stride ahead along the path of progress, liberation and social

transformations, in the struggle against imperialism; Zionism and reaction, based in the support of the popular masses and aiming towards genuine democracy. Under the other aspect, it is the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian national territory, through joint struggle against the tripartite enemy.

Our Party´s awareness of the dialectic link between these two national causes, each of which effects the other, is the factor which further enhances the JCP´s confidence in the inevitability of the unity of struggle of the two peoples, and in their eventual triumph.

FOURTH STAGE /FROM 1967 ON/

The previous decade /1957-1967/ was highlighted by the overwhelming steadfastness of the Communists in jails. That period, which lasted for ten years, /with the exception of a brief interuption from the spring of 1965 to the summer of 1966/ is considered - in spite of its immense hardships - to have comprised the years of the richest experience in the life of the Party. The imperialist-backed reactionary coup d´état against the patriotic government was followed by an all pervasive atmosphere of terror, involving the imprisonment of thousands of Communists and other patriots. The Party passed that ordeal with efficiency and honour, and in the process amassed more experience than ever before. In spite of the losses inflicted on the Party, that period, which was full of suffering, imprisonment, exile and dispersion, has

become a source of pride and glory for the Party.

The desert prison of Al Jafr was particularly associated with the Communists. There, the Communists implanted the traditions of steadfastness and turned the prison into a new type school.

However, the bright picture of the Communists in "Al Jafr" had no parallel in the group which was leading the Party during that period. That group was gradually tending to the right. The years of repression and persecution on the one hand, and the socio-economic changes that had taken place in the country as a result of the regime´s involvement in the policies of neo-colonialism and the latter´s mischievous and blackmailing methods, on the other, played an essential role in that group´s fall into the abyss of rightist opportunism. The consequences of that deviation were reflected on the entire activities and internal life of the Party. It hampered the Party´s march and was conducive to its isolation from the masses and their burning problems, especially after the imperialist-Israeli aggression of 1967 which entailed the emergence of the Palestinian résistance and an unprecedented national upsurge of the popular masses in Jordan.

The Party´s lagging behind its due responsibilities in those tempestuous events - due to the control assumed by that rightest group in its leadership - had a deeply negative effect on the Party´s militant march. In those years, the masses set out to revolutionary action with great enthusiasm. The masses´ spirit of enormous militancy which characterized those years should have placed the Party at the head of that mass upsurge - or to say the least, at its side - instead of lagging behind, as was the actual case.

While the Party did eventually manage - through a bitter internal conflict which was eventually terminated by the Party Conference of 1970 - to eliminate the influence and hegemony of that group, and thereupon formed "Partisan Forces" as an armed detachment within those of the Palestinian resistance, consolidated the Party's unity and regained its well-established revolutionary face, that happened only after a golden opportunity had been uselessly spent. Very soon, the bloody events of September 1970 took place and were followed by the expulsion of the Palestinian resistance from Jordan, repression of the popular masses, persecution of the patriotic forces, and the onset of an atmosphere of terror and harassment through increasingly bestial methods.

Our Party contributed with all its potential in confronting the cruel onslaught of that September. Though the military potential of the "Partisan Forces" was modest- due to their late formation only six months before - they spared no effort in their struggle and continued steadfastness.

As the events of September passed, the Party faced another problem, namely, the split of the rightist group which availed itself of the opportunity of the difficult situation being experienced by the Party and the entire Palestinian and Jordanian national movement, to perpetrate its criminal act of division.

In spite of the serious harm inflicted upon the Party by that split, which took place at a time when the Party was in a bad need for cohesion of its ranks and action, the JCP continued its militant march under most difficult conditions, checking the prevailing mood of despair and depression, and

exposing the poisonous campaign which was unleashed by the authorities to the effect of provoking regional dogmatism, dividing the national unity of the two peoples, and creating hostility between them. The Party pursued its policy calling for the return of the Palestinian resistance to Jordan and for granting it the possibility to freely work against the Zionist enemy.

Nevertheless, the Jordanian scene was not the only site of the Party's work. There was also the West Bank, where the JCP's branch, "The Palestinian Communist Organization", which effectively and selflessly contributed to our people's struggles there against the Israeli occupation, assumed a distinguished role in the mobilization, promotion of steadfastness, and encouragement of the masses' struggles, in the formation of the "Popular Resistance Movement", "The Palestinian National Front" and "The Committee for National Guidance", in addition to the "Committees of Working Women", trade unions, and professional and student organizations.

The JCP had yet another scene of struggle, namely, Lebanon, through the "Partisan Forces" detachment which, together with the Palestinian resistance, had left Jordan after the battles of "JERASH WOODS", and settled in Southern Lebanon until 1973, and which later joined FATAH organization. The JCP also contributed to the struggle in Lebanon through the voluntary campaigns with the participation of Party members and sympathisers - on several occasions - in defending the Palestinian resistance and the Lebanese patriotic and progressive movement.

The difficult but glorious march of the JCP faced ever more hardships and obstacles, including not only those created

by the continuous official repression directed against the Party for decades, but also those which caused by the rightist tendencies within which took the forms of factions which had grown tired of struggle and fatigued by persecution. Thereupon, they became inclined to despair and languor, and were tending to the right in political and organizational matters. Subsequently, they sought to turn the Party into a mere lenient organization which would secure them repute and mass esteem at home while releasing them of the implications and hard responsibilities of the struggle.

Thus, following the demise of the leader and First Secretary of our Party, Comrade Fuad Nassar, a rightist-opportunist faction appeared in the Party and tried to take over the Party leadership by immoral and anarchic means. As that attempt was defeated and condemned thanks to the vigilance of the Party members and cadres who undertook to defend their Party and its revolutionary policies, that faction pretended adherence to the Party's will, while in actual fact it covertly continued its action of subversion and factioning, until the question of establishing the Palestinian Communist Party was submitted for discussion in the Party. The faction took advantage of a minor difference of opinion between the Party leadership and the comrades in the West Bank, concerning the issue of whether to have a comprehensive or a limited PCP /i.e., party of the Palestinian people as a whole, or a party in the West Bank and Gaza Strip/, and the tasks of this party on the Palestinian scene and in the armed resistance movement, and it started a process of instigation and intrigues with a view to deepening that difference, whereas its own historical stance on this specific issue, as well as its own position which it had developed during the dis-

cussions on this subject, were essentially against the establishment of this party, either in a limited or comprehensive form, as the majority in the faction claimed "there were no new elements to speak for a new discussion on this issue!"

On the other hand, however, the faction group found in the difference of viewpoints - which could have been easily settled through calm comradely dialogue - a valuable opportunity which it used as a cover to resume its subversive sectarian activities which inflicted serious harm on the Party and induced an unnatural relationship between comrades following the same path in Jordan and the West Bank.

Though these long-standing difficulties of the Party with this faction have now been overcome by purging the Party ranks of that group, the consequences of its activities unfortunately continue to pose an obstacle in the way of regaining the normal - and even civil - relations between our Party and the fraternal Palestinian Communist Party. We are seriously upset about that, and on our part we will make every possible effort to improve the present atmosphere which has resulted exclusively from the lies, intrigues and acts of instigation of the faction group, and which has immensely harmed both parties.

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In this brief 40th anniversary review of our Party's march, underlining its stances and feats, and in referring to the difficulties it has faced and continues to face, as well as to the cases of diversion which have emerged in

circles of its leadership, we intend to reiterate one concrete fact, namely, that the Party is much stronger now than any of the obstacles placed in its way, and that it is absolutely unbreakable even as the harshest blows are dealt to it. The JCP is deeply rooted in the soil of its homeland, has won the minds and hearts of all honest citizens, and through its courageous stances has required the respect and esteem of broad masses of working people.

The present review of the Party's history is aimed at drawing lessons, as well as fresh will and determination to continue the struggle with much more zeal and without either empty boasting or derogatory self-criticism.

The 40-year march of our Party has been rich in fundamental deeds and sacrifices laid down by the Party members who have been subjected to all forms of torture, imprisonment exile and martyrdom, becoming bright landmarks in its history and medals of honour hung on its chest. Most Party members have spent some time in jail. The total number of the years of imprisonment suffered by the Communists has exceeded 3,000, in addition to the hundreds of years of detention which the Communists have spent in prisons without trial!

The Communists have set the best examples of martyrdom. The Party's list of martyrs, which started with Rawhi Zeid Al Keelani - who lost his life while tugged behind a horse soon after an anti-annexation demonstration in Nablus in 1950 - the two student martyrs, Ismael Al Khateeb and Raja Abu Amasheh,.. who fell in the anti-Baghdad Pact demonstrations, and the martyr Nassri Abu Rumman who died following the reactionary coup of 1957, has continued in an unending process, year after year. In 1963, Comrade Abdul Fattah Tulistan was tortured to

death. Comrades Samir Ajlouni and Abdel Rahman Al Qahwaji fell martyrs in Southern Lebanon in 1973, when confronting the Israeli invasion. In 1975, they were followed by our martyr comrades in Beirut: Ziad Suliman Al Qassim, Ahmed Awad Abu Al Sirhid and Zuheir Mahmoud Al Ish, who died while fighting against the Phalangist onslaught. In 1981, comrade Bassim Hijazi who, like many other comrade students, had interrupted his university studies in the Soviet Union and joined the Palestinian resistance movement, joined the list of the Party martyrs, in Southern Lebanon.

In the occupied West Bank, Comrade Ahmed Al Sheikh Deeb Dahdul fell under Zionist bullits while at the head of a mass demonstration in Selfeet in 1976 against the Israeli occupation. In that same year, Comrade Khader Abdallah Nimer was tortured to death at the hands of the Zionists in the Central Prison of Nablus.

In addition to that, dozens of our comrades, both men and women, have died on the path of struggle after having spent many years of their lives in the service of their Party and their people's cause; in the vanguard of those was Comrade Fuad Nassar, First Secretary of the Central Committee, and founder and leader of our Party until his death in 1976, as well as comrades Fakhri Maraga /Abu Azaad/ and Khalil Al Salim /Al Khal/.

We pledge to our Party martyrs and comrades who left us, and whose loss is enormous for the Party and struggle, that we will continue the march along the same path and derive from the lofty ideals they sacrificed their lives for, our determination to continue the struggle on this honourable path.

The 40th anniversary of our Party presents a brilliant record of a glorious revolutionary march which has been extremely rich in terms of struggle, production and sacrifice, and which has been marked with feats of heroism and exemplary steadfastness.

Let us turn this anniversary into an occasion for the consolidation of these traditions, and for the continuation of the struggle for the implementation of the aspirations of the fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian peoples to a national democratic regime in Jordan and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian soil.